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## MEDIA RELEASE

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***Beethoven's Ninth Symphony - Ode to Joy!***  
**Robert Moody & The Festival Orchestra**  
**Christina Major, Soprano; Rita Litchfield, Alto**  
**John McVeigh, Tenor; Troy Cook, Bass**  
**The Arizona Musicfest Chorus; Joel Rinsema, Chorus Master**

Sunday, February 27 at 3p.m.

Pinnacle Presbyterian Church

25150 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale 85255

**Tickets:** \$45; Premium Seating \$60; Student (K-College) free

Call (480) 488-0806, toll free (866) 488-0806 or visit [www.azmusicfest.org](http://www.azmusicfest.org) for tickets.

Complimentary valet parking is available

### **Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Opus 125, "Choral"**

*Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso*

*Molto vivace*

*Adagio molto e cantabile*

*Presto; Allegro assai*

### **Ludwig Van Beethoven**

(1770-1827)

#### **An Die Freude**

O Freunde, nicht diese Töne,  
sondern lasst uns angenehmere  
anstimmen, und freudenvollere.

Freude, schöner Götterfunken  
Tochter aus Elysium,  
wir betreten feuertrunken,  
Himmlische, dein Heiligtum!  
Deine Zauber binden wieder,  
was die Mode streng geteilt;  
alle Menschen werden Brüder,  
wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

Wem der grosse Wurf gelungen,  
eines Freundes Freund zu sein;  
wer ein holdes Weib errungen,  
mische seinen Jubel ein!  
Ja, wer auch nur eine Seele  
sein nennt auf dem Erdenrund!  
Und wer's nie gekonnt, der stehle  
weinend sich aus diesem Bund!

#### **To Joy**

O friends, not these sounds;  
rather let us strike up  
more pleasing and joyful ones.

Joy, lovely divine spark,  
daughter from Elysium,  
drunk with ardor we approach,  
O heavenly one, your sanctuary!  
Your magic reunites  
what custom sternly parted;  
all men shall be brothers  
there where your gently wings tarry.

Whosoever has enjoyed the great blessing  
of being a friend to a friend,  
whosoever has won a dear wife,  
let him mingle his joy with ours!  
Yes, and he too who has one spirit  
on the face of the earth to call his own!  
And whosoever has not, let him steal away  
weeping from the assembly!

continued

Freude trinken alle Wesen  
an den Brüsten der Natur;  
Alle Guten, alle Bösen  
folgen ihrer Rosenspur.  
Küsse gab sie uns und Reben,  
einen Freund, geprüft im Tod;  
Wollust ward dem Wurm gegeben,  
und der Cherub steht vor Gott.

All creation drinks joy  
from the breast of nature;  
all the good and all the bad  
follow in her rosy path.  
Kisses she gave to us and wine,  
and a friend tried in death;  
even to a worm ecstasy is granted,  
even the cherubs stand before God.

Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen  
durch des Himmels prächtgen Plan,  
laufet, Brüder, eure Bahn,  
freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen!

Just as gladly as His suns fly  
through the mighty path of heaven,  
so, brothers, run your course  
joyfully, like a hero off to victory!

Seid umschlungen, Millionen!  
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!  
Brüder, überm Sternenzelt  
muss ein lieber Vater wohnen.

O you millions, let me embrace you!  
Let this kiss be for the whole world!  
Brothers, above the tent of stars  
a loving Father cannot but dwell.

Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen?  
Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt?  
Such ihn überm Sternenzelt!  
Über Sternen muss er wohnen.

Do you prostrate yourselves, millions?  
Do you sense your Creator, world?  
Seek Him above the tent of stars!  
Above the stars He cannot but dwell!

### **Literal translation by William Mann**

The *Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Opus 125, "Choral"* by **Ludwig Van Beethoven** (1770-1827). Doesn't the composer's name or the mere title say it all?

Why, then, should one add to the millions of words, in every language, that have been written over the almost two centuries since Beethoven composed his last symphony? Surely, the music has been fully analyzed and dissected. Certainly, the composer's artistic vision has been explained, and the many political uses and abuses of the work have been variously explored.

Praised as the greatest symphonic statement ever written, the work has also been deplored as over-blown and preposterously idealistic. It seems the commentary is endless, as a quick Google search will confirm. And yet, at every live performance, the program notes provide still more comments on this epic composition and offer the writer's personal thoughts and reaction to it. But, what is truly essential is *your* emotional response and *your* understanding of what should be a momentous musical experience. To that end, perhaps a short road map to the piece may be a helpful guide even for those who know the work well.

The First Movement is in early Classical sonata form. Having said that, we must immediately add that this is not an adequate description. In Beethoven's hands, the form has become huge: it is now an expanded example of thematic creation that provides bold hints and even phrases of the final choral movement. Emotionally, this opening section is an anguished expression of despair and restless striving for some far-off resolution to this misery.

The Second Movement is not, as expected, a slow one. Once again, Beethoven departs from the classical symphonic structure and offers a scherzo. However, this is not the formal minuet of Haydn and Mozart; rather it is a fiery, unrestrained dance. It is as if Beethoven is seeking relief from the previous highly-emotional material, perhaps glimpsing a happier world in the future.

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The *Adagio* movement follows, and what a glorious, quiet, solemn section -- a theme and variations -- it is. Listen especially for the horn solo. Today, we will hear this splendid music played on a modern instrument, while in Beethoven's time, the valved horn was just being developed. No horn performance then could be as full and seamless as today's.

The Fourth Movement doesn't simply begin, it slams into being. Previous thematic materials appear, only to be rejected. Next, we hear the notes of the famed choral theme played by the cellos and double basses. Soon, the entire orchestra repeats the magnificent material; the brass section is notably in full throttle. Suddenly, there is a horrendous chord and the orchestra dissolves into chaos. The music settles down, then attempts more passages of the long-awaited choral theme. There is yet another halt and shriek of dissonance. Finally, the human voice intervenes, putting an end to the instrumental ugliness.

The bass-baritone vigorously sings, "O friends, not these sounds; rather let us strike up more pleasing and joyful ones." The soloists and chorus answer the call. Schiller's famed *Ode to Joy* finally makes Beethoven's philosophical and musical message clear. The words, imperative in their meaning and expression, are sung exuberantly, then quietly and reverently. It is music of outward joy, alternating with moments of sublime sanctity, becoming a utopian paean to the brotherhood of Man and peace. This is not an orchestra with chorus used as punctuation. Nor is it a choral work with orchestral accompaniment. NO! This is a true partnership: the chorus is an integral part of the orchestral textures and harmonies. As one, they march together, soar and sing of hope. After the chorus once more pronounces Schiller's manifesto, the final sounds are those of orchestral triumph. Surely this must be the very joy that Beethoven envisioned!

### *Notes by Fran Rosenthal*

#### *About Today's Guest Artists*

Rising star, American soprano **Christina Major**, is already well known for her sumptuous and agile Italianate sound that brings back memories of the earlier greats. The *San Francisco Chronicle* called her a "fascinating and hugely talented singer" with a "magnetic presence and vocal brilliance."

Highlights from this season include her debut in Verdi's *Requiem* in Fort Worth and a Lincoln Center concert as a Prize Winner chosen by the prestigious Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation. Previously, Ms. Major has performed the role of an Accuser/Victim in the world premiere of Bright Sheng's *Madam Mao* at the Santa Fe Opera, Mimi in *La Bohème* at Knoxville Opera, Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* and Violetta in *La Traviata* with Opera Coeur D'Alene.

Ms. Major frequently appears on the concert stage. Notable appearances include an encore performance of Handel's *Messiah* with Tucson Symphony, Mahler's *Symphony No.2* with the Greenville Symphony and Florida Bach Festival, and Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* with the Dallas Symphony Chorus. This is her second appearance at *Arizona Musicfest*.

Mezzo-soprano and champion of new American art song, **Rita Litchfield** was an active recitalist and soloist in the New York-Metro area before relocating to Phoenix in 2006. She has appeared as a soloist with *Arizona Musicfest* and Arizona Bach Festival, and the American Bach concert series, and is currently in her fifth season with the two-time Grammy award winning Phoenix Chorale. Ms. Litchfield has been a featured soloist with Pacific Symphony, Winston-Salem Symphony, The Phoenix Symphony, American Symphony Orchestra and others, performing Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* and *Mass in C*, Bach's *Weinachts Oratorium*, many of his cantatas, and both the Mozart and Verdi *Requiem*s.

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Ms. Litchfield has debuted at Lincoln Center Avery Fisher Hall and Carnegie Hall, covered roles for the New York City Opera, and appeared on regional opera stages, including Chautauqua Opera, Florida Grand Opera and Opera Roanoke. She received her bachelor's from the University of the Pacific Conservatory and did graduate work at James Madison University. She has studied with Arthur Levy, Dr. Craig Fields and Dr. George Buckbee.

Tenor **John McVeigh** has been acclaimed by the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* for his "rich lyrical tenor, fabulous top notes, and striking good looks." He appears regularly with major opera companies across North America and in Europe. During the 2009-2010 season, he returned to the Gran Teatro del Liceu (Barcelona) and the Teatro Real (Madrid) as Endimione in Martin y Soler's *L'abore di Diana*, and to the Metropolitan Opera for *Il Tabarro*. Mr. McVeigh has sung Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* with Glimmerglass Opera and Austin Lyric Opera, Tamino in *The Magic Flute* with New York City Opera and Houston Grand Opera, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* with Austin Lyric Opera, and Arbace in *Idomeneo* with Santa Fe Opera.

Recent concert appearances include Handel's *Messiah* with the Seattle Symphony, Monteverdi's *Vespers* for the Théâtre du Châtelet, Bernstein's *Mass* with the Utah Symphony and *Elijah* with the Calgary Philharmonic.

Mr. McVeigh is a graduate of The Eastman School and an alumnus of the prestigious Houston Grand Opera Studio. This is his second appearance at *Arizona Musicfest*.

American **Troy Cook** has been hailed as having a "resplendent baritone"; a voice "with a warm tone and solid musicality." Add to this his acting skill and comedic talents, and it's no wonder he is in great demand.

During recent seasons, he debuted at major European opera houses, including Covent Garden (*Così fan Tutte*), the Semperoper in Dresden and the Hamburgische Staatsoper (*La Bohème*), and the Grand Théâtre de Genève (Ginastera's *Beatrix Cenci*). Last spring, he returned to Hamburg as Ford in Verdi's *Flagstaff*. Future appearances include Count Almaviva (*Marriage of Figaro*) for Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Zurga (*The Pearl Fishers*) for Opera Las Palmas, and Lescaut (*Manon Lescaut*) for the Opera Company of Philadelphia.

Mr. Cook sang *Carmina Burana* with The Phoenix Symphony in 2005. In 2009, he appeared at *Arizona Musicfest* in a memorable performance of Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, conducted by Robert Moody.

He earned a master's from The Eastman School and currently studies with Bill Schuman. This is Mr. Cook's third appearance at *Arizona Musicfest*.

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